

FEATURES

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uniform,” she said. “There’s no need to look like the males. I think the separation was good. It looks nicer with a white shirt. The white shirt added to the appearance – it stood out.”

Though there are mixed feelings among females regarding their proposed uniform, Master Gunnery Sgt. Donald Garland, who is testing the new staff NCO Evening Dress blouse, said he likes the changes. The blouse he is testing more closely resembles that which is worn by officers and eliminates the need for a collared shirt and black bow tie.

“So far, I think they look sharp,” said Garland. “I think they look as good as the previ-

ous Mess Dress jacket and will be closer in appearance to that of the officers’, as they are designed using the same pattern.”

The experimental blouses that are worn to the Marine Corps Ball are going to be tested for “acceptance,” with the floor still open for more suggestions, said Holmes.

“They are not the final design — they are definitely test coats,” she said. “We want people to tell us their likes and dislikes, and the only way to know is to put them out there and collect data.”

The team will continue to test the Dress Blue prototypes aboard bases around the world, from Okinawa to MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., gathering information to improve the blouses’ design.



Cpl. Jennifer Brofer

Members of the clothing team explain how the male staff NCO Evening Dress prototype features a high-standing collar, like that found on the officer uniform. The experimental blouse, which will be worn during the Marine Corps Birthday Ball season by a few select Marines, eliminates the need for a collared shirt and black bow tie.

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going to get it until you experience it.”

Shappee was not alone in his praise for the Marines’ efforts.

“The Marines acted in appropriate ways, when confronted with the events,” said Wagner. “There were a lot of learning points for many Marines, and they will help the Marines in the event of real terrorist events.”

“It was a success because the events stressed the Marines AT/FP knowledge and capabilities. There were many learning points for the Depot Marines and person-

nel,” Wagner added.

The simulated event included seven key events: a probing call concerning the Provost Marshal’s Office’s working habits and schedules, angry parents calling about their children, a suspicious boat watching Parris Island (simulated), a biological weapon letter sent to 1st RTBn., an angry parent arriving at front gate to get his child, suspicious people on the Depot, and a suspicious vehicle entering the Depot.

The dates and prospective training events for the next exercise have yet to be released.

RED RIBBON,
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In 1998, Department of Defense Surveys of Health Related Behaviors Among Military Personnel revealed that drug use throughout the armed forces had drastically declined since 1980. The survey showed that only about three percent of Marines had used illicit drugs for a period of 30 days or more in 1998. Despite the statistics, however, drug use continues to exist among Marines.

“I won’t feel that our efforts to increase awareness are a complete success until the elimination of positive urinalysis results,” said Wierzbicki.

To begin the efforts at increasing awareness, the Lemira Elementary School Percussion Ensemble, from Sumter, kicked off the Red Ribbon event with a 30-minute musical performance. The ensemble, made up of students ranging from second to fifth grades, have been nationally acclaimed for their talents, winning first place in the 2003 Oscar Mayer Schoolhouse Jam Talent Search. The group spends 600 hours a year traveling, rehearsing and performing.

Following the performance, Doug Kahn, Beaufort DEA and former Marine, spoke about illegal drugs and their negative effects on the Beaufort area. He elaborated on some of the factors that help to fuel the state’s drug activity, explaining how South Carolina is particularly susceptible to trafficking because of its geographical

location. Its close proximity with Atlanta makes it a natural distribution point for Atlanta-based drug dealers. Also, he explained that since Interstate 95 connects New York and Miami, there has been increasing evidence of organizational

activity extending to these major distribution hubs, according to the DEA.

Following Kahn’s speech, a prisoner from the brig at Naval Weapons Station Charleston, who is serving out a sentence for drug charges, relayed a valuable message to the Marines in attendance.

“You could’ve heard a pin drop after he was finished speaking,” said Wierzbicki. “The bottom line he was trying to get across is that it’s just not worth

it. He’s serving out a five-year sentence and his wife just had their first child three months ago.”

For the more than 450 in attendance, Semper Fit had an information booth set up in the lobby of the theater, complete with pamphlets, brochures and knick-knacks for the taking.

“We provide an invaluable service by keeping our military personnel educated on health issues and abuse awareness, and it takes a team effort,” said Crystal Dilliard, Semper Fit Health Promotions director and registered nurse. “When we, the community, make a stand against illicit drugs, we send a strong message which promotes a healthier, safer Marine Corps.”

To find out more about Red Ribbon Week, log on to www.tcada.state.tx.us/redribbon.



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